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## Barnett Says U.S. Near Dictatorship

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# Barnett Says U.S. Near Dictatorship

CA 9/4/63

MONROE, La., Sept. 3. — (AP) — Mississippi Gov. Ross Barnett charged Tuesday night the United States is "one short step from dictatorship."

Barnett, in a speech before the Louisiana Committee for Free Electors, said that the step between the people and dictatorship is "the Constitution of the United States as it was written and not as it is being interpreted."

The race issue, Barnett said, was an issue in its proper context but was being over-emphasized and "used as a smoke screen to hide the biggest political power grab in American history."

He referred to pending civil rights legislation and said it contained "a very great threat to the basic rights and independence of all Americans, not merely those of us who insist on a racially - segregated social system."

Barnett said the Constitution was being ignored and violated

in Washington.

He said the pending civil rights act, if enacted, would have brought the nation to the point "where our free enterprise system is destroyed and where the checks and balances of the Constitution no longer restrain the Federal Government . . ."

"John Kennedy must be defeated in 1964 if this nation is to be saved. Our salvation does not lie within the Republicans.

"The South can positively name the next president of the United States."

He said the South also had the power to control largely the Congress if it was united.

He explained that the free elector plan would enable the people within a party to determine whether they wanted their presidential electors pledged to the national party candidate or unpledged and free to vote for a conservative.

He criticized Louisiana's Legislature for not passing a similar plan and said "the timidity and reluctance of some of your politicians was very evident at the last session of the Louisiana Legislature."